1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Theoretically, residence is patri-
591 rilocal, yet there are several instances in which it is matrilocal. Theoretically too, the brothers of the family form the powerful or secure in-group and live around a common dance place as a lineage complex. Actually, brothers who cannot get along amicably will scatter. For example, Manifani of Dikimpe, as the eldest brother, lived on his lineage dance place in New Dikimpe; the second brother lived on the dance place of Old Dikimpe; the third had moved to the offspring hamlet of Dikimpe called Maiyamasang; and their two half brothers, by the same father but a different mother, lived at opposite ends of their mother's village of Atimelang. This example is not important in itself, but it does illustrate nicely the flexibility of residence that exists in practice. It can of course be balanced by several instances in which brothers follow the traditional pattern. Expediency and interpersonal relationships outweigh theory and dictate arrangements.

428 Expediency and the industry of the child also determine the inheritance of land; a child is usually given a garden plot as soon as he is old enough to work productively. Both men and women own fields inherited from their fathers or mothers.

262 Dry rice is in all probability the oldest staple of the area, but at present maize has replaced it as the daily food and rice is reserved largely for feasts. There is a local belief that "rice makes you fat and corn
[827] makes you strong." A fat body is the criterion of health. In addition to rice and corn there is a large range of other foods, including millet, beans, sweet potatoes, cassava, taro, and a wide variety of tubers. Fruits include oranges, mangoes, papayas, breadfruit, jack fruit, and many kinds of bananas.

462 Theoretically, women are responsible for the cultivation and collec-
[422] tion of all vegetable foods, and theory is reinforced by giving them ownership of all plant produce, regardless of the land and labor men may have invested in its production. Men, on the other hand, control
● 436 the financial system and the three currencies through which it operates — pigs, gongs, and metal kettledrums called mokos. Arrows too are used for money but only as small change. The monetary value of pigs
435 is highly inflated in relation to their consumption value. Their flesh is
262 rarely eaten except at feasts, in order that their value may be added to the interminable and complex monetary accounting that is basic to ceremonial procedure. In fact, should a pig be killed accidentally, a ceremonial feast of one sort or another is improvised to justify its consumption.

436 Of the three currencies, mokos are undoubtedly the coin of the realm. They range through unequal steps from the value of one rupiah

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

(50 cents) to that of 3000 rupiahs ($1500).* Pigs are usually estimated in terms of moko values. Thus a pig (*fe*) is called a Piki fe, meaning it is worth a Piki moko, or in East Indies currency, about 5 rupiahs ($2.50).

Currency is invested in three primary directions: first, the purchase of a wife, which is not a single negotiation but a series of extremely complex familial exchanges that last as long as the marriage itself; second, a series of burial feasts that may drag on for a generation or two before the series is completed; third, the building of the lineage houses, entailing financial elaborations that may take several years and delay the completion of the dwelling far beyond the actual building time.

There are many kinds of smaller investments in which flesh food such as pigs and goats is used; most frequently chickens suffice. Such outlays are made as sacrifices on several occasions: when the village guardian spirit (*ulenai*) is snared and dragged into the carving erected for it; when any one of a whole host of personal familiars is placated;

* These mokos are shaped like hourglasses. Actually, *moko* is not the Alorese word but the most widely used Malay term. The mokos are not of local manufacture; they were formerly imported from Java by Makassarese traders who exchanged them for goods. Since importation of the drums stopped half a century ago, the supply is no longer adequate and their value is rising. A government census taken some twenty years ago reported the presence of twenty thousand mokos throughout the island.

The natives have assigned to each of the various categories of mokos a value in rupiahs, the monetary unit of the Netherlands East Indies. For readers who may be interested in estimating the worth of the mokos named in this book, a list of the categories and their assigned values is given here. Rupiahs were maintained at the same exchange rates as Holland guilders (florins). The currency values when given in dollars have been translated at the rate of two rupiahs to a dollar. Monetary values for mokos became stabilized in the early 1920's, when money was about twice as cheap as it was in 1938. Therefore, to get the cash price of a moko in 1938 it would be necessary to halve the listed worth.

Mokos	*Rupiahs*	*Dollars*	*Mokos*	*Rupiahs*	*Dollars*
Lasingtafa	1	.50	Kolmale	13	6.50
Salaka	2	1.00	Hawataka	15	7.50
Fatafa	2 1/2	1.25	Yekasing	25	12.50
Kabali	3	1.50	Fehawa	30	15.00
Piki	5	2.50	Aimala	65	32.50
Tawantana	5	2.50	Afuipe	70	35.00
Hiekbul	6	3.00	Makassar	130 and up	
Tamamia	8	4.00	Djawa	500 and up	
Maningmauk	10	5.00	Itkira	1000 and up	

This list is incomplete, and from the Kolmale on, the values are only approximate. There are many subdivisions of these higher bracket categories and considerable variation in prices given by informants. The sequence of relative values, however, is accurate.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

436

The Alorese prize mokos above everything else. Here the top of one is being fastened on with rattan strips and pieces of corncob.

342
857
534
482

His young sister in a carrying shawl, a boy accompanies on the gongs the communal work of building a lineage house.

(p. 32R)

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

#136
765

The largest currency display of two seasons was made at the tumukun's death feast payoff (*baleti*) for his father-in-law. The mokos and broken gongs are ranged in order of value. On the dance-place altar are quarters of pigs, which will also be paid to the debtors.

292

Children hurrying home in their raincapes of a late afternoon as the rainy season begins. Note the house post and rat disk at the extreme left and in the background the fields of corn.

Cp.32 xJ

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

role of satellites, which is a partial abandonment of goal and a partial continuation of childhood patterns.

FINANCE AND ESTHETICS

It is interesting that there are only two areas in which men seem to achieve any degree of esthetic self-expression. Both are indirectly associated with finance. One is gong playing, the other is versification. It will be recalled that gongs are one of the currencies. Whole gongs (*fokung*) are not very fluid as currency since they are prized for ceremonial purposes. Broken gongs (*rai*) are used constantly as small change. Their values range from about fifty cents to several rupiahs. Gong playing begins in middle childhood and may continue throughout life. More often the long, steady gong beating of death memorials (*sinewai*), of lineage house building, and so forth is turned over to boys and young men, but older men frequently experiment with new rhythms or set the pattern for an orchestra composed of mokos and gongs of different sizes.

The connection of versification with finance comes out more plainly than that of gong playing and finance. It is the only form of poetic expression possessed by the people. It is, in fact, practically the only attempt at literary expression of any sort. The preoccupation with finance and even its esthetic transmutations are evident from some of the verses quoted below. The dances last from eight or nine o'clock in the evening until dawn the next day. They usually precede a ceremonial event, with its inevitable financial concomitants. The participants, facing inward, their arms about each other, form a circle on the dance place. They progress sideways.

Any man may begin a verse. The form in which he expresses himself has certain stereotyped limits and a set range of elaborate metaphors, but it is not so fixed that creative leeway is forbidden. As the soloist finishes a verse, he indicates a change in tempo. Thereupon all the dancers join in one of the dozen or more set choruses characterized by syllables which are predominantly meaningless and slightly more rapid in beat. The ability to improvise is highly esteemed. Ambitious young men of seventeen or eighteen years first try to versify in this fashion. An inadequate performance is not publicly ridiculed, but there is a certain amount of snickering behind the performer's back. Those with real ability persist in their efforts and may be admired performers by the time they are in their late thirties or early forties. Abilities naturally vary. By rough estimate perhaps 10 per cent of the mature men are recognized as good singers. A few verses taken at random from

2: DuBois E-5 (1938-1939) 1941 OF5 Alor OF5

Three meals a day is the symbol of adulthood. It is significant that food as a status symbol should be used at the time that adult sex drives and financial responsibilities first become pressing.

This situation at the end of a long series of childhood experiences probably helps to set the wife as a mother figure. The wife, like the mother, is the responsible provider of food. A high degree of identification between the parent-child and husband-wife relation is actually conscious and valued in the culture. When older men lecture a young couple who have quarrelled, they invariably tell the young woman that she should be a mother to her husband and tell the young man that he should be a father to his wife. One of the strongest expressions of this sentiment was given by a young informant who may have made the identification a little more strongly than was customary.

> Wives are like our mothers. When we were small our mothers fed us. When we are grown our wives cook for us. If there is something good, they keep it in the pot until we come home. When we were small we slept with our mothers; when we are grown we sleep with our wives. Sometimes when we are grown we wake in the night and call our wives "mother."

The mother is definitely the provider but, as we have seen, she is an uncertain one in many cases. It is not surprising therefore to find the relationship between spouses a precarious and mistrustful one. Even though the whole weight of the masculine financial system acts to stabilize marriages, Atimelangers average approximately 1.9 divorces apiece. This seems a high average when one considers the elaborate and cumbersome monetary negotiations involved in divorce.

So far I have been concerned with sketching briefly some of the hunger experience of childhood, the associated restrictive disciplines of adults, and the devices through which the culture somewhat negatively permits children to satisfy this basic need. There has been some indication how all of these affect human relationships. I should like to turn now to a series of institutionalized food attitudes and behavior.

The first and most striking is sacrifice, which is a matter of almost daily experience, representing practically all relationships to the supernatural. The word for sacrifice means literally "to feed," and every supernatural object is so placated. Individual and village tutelary spirits, the graves of the dead, the spirits of ancestors who have cultivated a field, wealth-bringing supernaturals, are all given their share of chicken blood, rice, and pig meat. Realistically enough, the offering is small and purely symbolic. The bulk of the sacrificial food is consumed by the people. In myths the sky heroes are always fed rice, millet, and eggs. Their revivification is achieved by pouring a pot of millet over their heads. The building of lineage houses must be accompanied by feasts at every stage of construction, and its importance is proportional to the number of pigs slaughtered in the course of building it. Newly purchased gongs or *mokes*[4] must be fed. It is, in fact, difficult to find any aspect of religious and social ceremonial which does not involve "feeding." In this connection it is not without signifi-

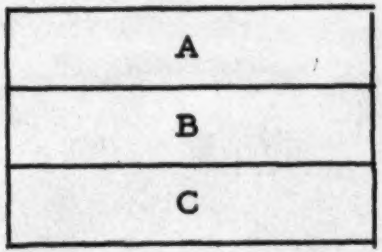
[4] Metal kettle drums used as currency.

3: DuBois

291, 342, 426, 436, 476, 482, 584

OF5 Alor

The plates appearing on page 482 have been reproduced for the files in the following manner:



3:DuBois E-5 (1938-1939)1940 OF5 Alor OF5

436
426

In Alor finance is an important feature of the culture; to it the men devote most of their time. The currency consists of pigs, expensive metal kettledrums called "moko" and broken or worn-out gongs. Here (right) a financier is paying off his father's death feast

[p. 482 A]

3:DuBois E-5 (1938-1939)1940 CF5 Alor CF5

457 Such a division can be made only where money is not the medium for securing the necessities of life as it is in the West. Of course the question immediately arises, "*If* the people of Atimelang do not buy food and clothing, if they pay no rent, what do they do with their currencies?" There are three main outlets. First, they pay off the obligations of parents' death feasts in order to placate and honor the ghosts. Second, they participate in the building of lineage houses. Third and most important of all, they buy wives. Formerly they also bought human heads as "spouses" for murdered kin, but certainly no heads have been taken in Alor for some twenty years and murder now brings retribution from the Netherlands government.

436 These transactions might seem straightforward and simple enough, but actually they are far from being so. Currencies, wherever they are used, seem to give rise to strange complexities of manipulation. Part of the complexity lies in the very nature of the currencies themselves. For example, pigs might seem at first blush to be primarily consumption goods, yet actually they do not so function in Alor nor are they so considered. Flesh is rarely eaten and only in connection with feast payments. A pig which dies or is killed accidentally leads immediately to giving a feast since it is unthinkable that a pig could be eaten casually. In fact, one way of forcing a man into giving feasts is to kill his pigs. [262]

Mokos, or metal kettledrums, are the second and chief currency standard into which the other currencies may be translated. The mokos themselves are not identical and their values do not run in a decimal series, although the counting system does. There is always latitude for disagreement on the exact value of a particular moko and particularly in equating pigs of varying sizes with mokos of varying types. Fantan may offer a pig worth a five-dollar moko in his estimation, but Maliseni, who is receiving the pig, will equate it with a moko worth only four dollars. The matter must then be arbitrated, usually stormily. Here we have the clue to masculine labor and why it can be so time-consuming. Lastly, a word about gongs. They are highly prized in themselves as musical instruments and are therefore not so fluid a currency as pigs and mokos. Only when the gongs are broken or worn out do they become a common medium of exchange.

Essentially the Alorese currency system rests on interest and credit. Mokos and gongs are not of local manufacture. They were imported from Java by Makassarese traders who brought them to the coast, where they were exchanged for

[p. 484 B]

●436 goods. For the past half century mokos have no longer been imported, and the supply of currency is far less than the transactions of some seventy thousand inhabitants require. I was not able to make an actual estimate of the number of gongs, mokos and pigs on the island, but a government census some twenty years ago set the number of mokos at twenty thousand. This is undoubtedly an underestimation and it does not of course include gongs and pigs, but it does indicate that there is not a superabundance of currency. If there is a concept of profit and if there
426 is not an inexhaustible supply of currency, obviously one must resort to credit, and this is precisely what the Alorese have done. Like ourselves they consider credits as assets, so when a man is dying his last will consists of recounting to his heirs all his outstanding debts.

There are, however, certain marked differences between their system and ours. First, credit cannot be pyramided and, second, the profit system rests primarily on good will and not on law. In fact, there is no institutionalised
[626] law in Alor; there is only custom. The result of this is that hostilities are held in check because a man fears to alienate a person who may some
[562] day be the object of a profitable loan. Incidentally, this permits women, who are not principals in the financial game, to be much more outspoken than men. In addition to a system of profit which rests on good will, custom requires that one should never pay debts until they have been repeatedly and persistently demanded by the creditor. This places the Alorese financier in the irritating position of having to dun constantly for payments, tactfully yet forcefully enough to get paid with the promised profit. If he fails to be persistent enough, he will not be paid. If he fails to be tactful enough, there will be a quarrel, the upshot of which will be at best a return of the property borrowed, without the addition of interest. In other words, in Alor as elsewhere the profit system can break down but it breaks down into simple reciprocity.

556 On the other hand, wealth can also be used as an expression of rivalry. An insult may precipitate two rival financiers into an orgy of pig slaughtering until they and even their remotest kin have emptied their pens. Finally a halt is called and the pigs are reckoned. The man who has slaughtered most is entitled to a formalised gloat which begins: "*Sapalisk!* The rooster's tail droops!" He then adds such insults and elaborations as the occasion and opponent furnish. However, the Alorese are a realistic and hard-headed lot and rarely allow themselves the luxury of such wasteful displays.

[p. 485 A]